

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS
FOR
SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT**

Requisition No.: RQ959119
Caption: Mobile Breastfeeding Support Application (App)
Proposed Contractor: Pacify Health, Inc.
Program: Department of Health (DOH), Office of the Director (OD)

FINDINGS

1. AUTHORIZATION

DC Official Code §2-354.04; 27 DCMR 1304, 1700, 1701; PPRA 2010, Section 404

2. MINIMUM NEED

DC WIC has a requirement for a mobile breastfeeding application service provider to offer WIC participants' with 24-hour, video-enabled breastfeeding support without an appointment.

3. BACKGROUND

Through USDA's Peer Counseling Model which is offered by Pacify Health, Inc., breastfeeding peer counseling services can be provided beyond the WIC site business hours. The requirement for breastfeeding and lactation support that is available 24 hours/day and 7 days/week (24x7) is a common challenge our local agencies face due to limited staffing and participant privacy concerns. Pacify helps extend breastfeeding support services beyond the WIC site hours with a network of International Board of Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) to provide 24x7 availability coverage.

While the DC WIC Program employs seven peer counselors, it has just one on-staff IBCLC supporting the Program's roughly 5,000 annual births. Even counting peer counselors, the Program is only able to provide 20% of the recommended ratio of educators to mothers. The difficulty is compounded by a severe shortage of IBCLCs in the DC area: 1.5 IBCLCs per 1,000 births, versus 3.4 nationally. These constraints handicap the Program's ability to increase breastfeeding support efforts for new mothers. The US Surgeon General has noted that approximately 8.6 IBCLCs are needed per 1,000 live births to deliver adequate breastfeeding education and support.

The majority of infants enrolled in the District's WIC Program are born to African American, adolescent single mothers, who face unique barriers to breastfeeding and continue to have disparate breastfeeding rates compared to Caucasian counterparts. This is evident when considering that roughly 62% of new moms signing up for WIC are breastfeeding; compared to 81% of new moms in DC overall including WIC participants who are breastfeeding; compared to a national average of 82% of new moms who are breastfeeding.

Expanded breastfeeding support through Pacify will help give greater access to care for breastfeeding DC WIC participants, providing more equitable services for a population in need of additional care.

3. ESTIMATED REASONABLE PRICE

The estimated fair and reasonable price is \$199,575.00.

4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT

While there are several known providers capable of meeting one or more of the various requirements, none other than Pacify have been found to meet the foremost essential requirements of DC WIC as discussed below.

- Pacify provides users with on-demand IBCLCs available 24x7 without an appointment. Pacify's IBCLCs answer calls within 3 minutes or less. Other available tele-medicine providers require an appointment or utilize an answering service with a later callback. Timely support is critical in breastfeeding, and only Pacify provides near-instant support.
- Pacify offers IBCLCs providers trained on the WIC Peer Counseling Model or the Loving Support Model.
- Pacify provides real-time live video-enabled breastfeeding and lactation support; a feature that IBCLCs find critical to the provision of adequate support in breastfeeding.
- Pacify provides lactation support in both English and Spanish, leveraging a nationwide network of Spanish-speaking IBCLCs.

The Contract Specialist conducted market research, reaching-out to several vendors who provide the same/similar support services and asked to respond to several questions regarding their products and services. The vendors that were contacted include:

1. Birthing Gently
2. LatchMD
3. Breastfeeding Central
4. Baby Connect

Only two replies were received from LatchMD and Breastfeeding Central in response to market research information requests issued.

LatchMD does not offer live video support. They rather provide links to YouTube videos demonstrating latching techniques. They do, however, employ Spanish speaking professionals who offer breastfeeding support. This app does require a scheduled appointment in order to obtain the support of their lactation consultants. The app does offer 24x7 chat support.

The Breastfeeding Central app is also not video-enabled, and support is offered only with English speaking professionals. Appointments are required.

Additionally, Pacify provides all-inclusive subscriptions for lactation support. Many other tele-medicine providers operate on a fee-for-service basis, making it difficult to predict actual costs in advance of services taking place. Pacify's population-based license provides transparent pricing, which is most beneficial from a price reasonableness perspective.

Based on the evidence cited above, it is recommended a Sole Source procurement be granted and a contract be awarded to Pacify Health, Inc. to support these critical requirements. There are no other vendors who can supply all essential requirements to meet all needs of this procurement.

5. CERTIFICATION BY AGENCY HEAD:

I hereby certify that the above findings are true, correct and complete.

Date

LaQuandra Nesbitt, MD, MPH
Director, Department of Health

6. CERTIFICATION BY CONTRACTING OFFICER:

I have reviewed the above findings and certify that they are sufficient to justify the use of the sole source method of procurement under the cited authority. I certify that the notice of intent to award a sole source contract was published in accordance with Section 404(c) of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (D.C. Official Code §2-354.04) and that **X response was received.** I recommend that the Chief Procurement Officer approve the use of the sole source procurement method for this proposed contract.

Date

Wil Giles
Chief Contracting Officer

DETERMINATION

Based on the above findings and in accordance with the cited authority, I hereby determine it is not feasible or practical to invoke the competitive solicitation process under 27 DCMR 1500 or 1600. Accordingly, I determine the District is justified in the Sole Source procurement method of procurement.

Date

George A. Schutter III
Chief Procurement Officer